

# The Examiner

## **Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms**

"Serving with Pride and Professionalism"

Volume 7, No. 1

An Award Winning Publication

January 1999

Introducing Captain D. H. Freer, MC, USN...

# Mission First and People Always

By Dan Barber, Public Affairs Officer Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms

ission first and people always, with the emphasis on people. This is the basic comman philosophy of Captain Douglas H. Freer, MC, USN, Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms newest Executive Officer.

"The primary role of the executive officer is to obviously support the commanding officer and the mission of the command. Another role, is managing the in-house operations to help make and implement policy. The executive officer is also responsible for morale, good order and discipline within the command," said CAPT Freer. "But, in reality I work for everybody in the command to help create the environment to allow people to be maximally effective and to hopefully improve the efficiency of the operation," he added.

Captain Freer reports to the hospital as its sixth XO from duty as the First Marine Expeditionary Force (IMEF) at Camp Pendleton, Calif., working directly for Lieutenant General Knutsen and responsible for the medical support to the 45,000 Marines of IMEF.

Captain Douglas H. Freer was born September 15, 1946 in Washington, DC. He is the son of a Naval Aviator and is a third generation career military officer. Both of his grandfathers served with the U.S. Army, one as a line officer, the other as a physician.

Growing up as a Navy dependent, Captain Freer lived in many places, Washing'This place is really unique. At this and only one other command that I'd checked into, I felt like the command environment was really home...'

ton, DC; Norfolk, Va; New Brunswick, Maine; New Jersey; Monterey, CA; Coronado, CA; Boston, MA; Pensacola, Fla., and a couple of stays with his grandparents at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., Washington, DC, and Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

He finally ended up in San Diego where his father retired and he graduated from Point Loma High School in 1964.

San Diego remains CAPT Freer's home of record.

Following high school, CAPT Freer went on to attend San Diego State University (SDSU) where in 1968, he graduated with distinction with a degree in Microbiology. After SDSU, he was awarded a National Institutes of Health fellowship to attend Stanford University where he earned a Master's degree in Medical Microbiology in 1970.

From 1971-74, CAPT Freer worked as a research associate and taught high school mathematics. In 1977, he earned a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree from California College of Podiatric Medicine and entered the U.S. Air Force as a First Lieutenant in the Biological Service Corps.

"I started out in the Air Force, only because at that time there were no Podiatrist

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## From the Desk of the CO...

# Looking Forward To 1999

promises to be an exciting one for all of us. As we start off on our journey through the new year, I would like each one of you to review your personal goals for the year and rededicate your energies to accomplishing your goals. Whether you aspire to work toward a college degree, earn a certification, or accomplish a career milestone, you need to know the direction you want to work in and plan for accomplishing your goal. This is your commitment to yourself, your career, and the command.

We will be doing the same thing as a command. In: January, the Board of Directors, the Executive Officer and I, along with some key specialists, will be re-evaluating our strategic plan and checking to be sure it is still valid for us. With the strategic plan as our

compass, we will develop our annual plan to accomplish the goals we set for ourselves. As we go through this process, we will ask for your input at each step, so please take the time to discuss it in your workspaces with your Division Officers and Chiefs. Everyone has an important role to play and we need everyone's thoughts and perspective.

Each one of you is familiar with the command's four goals of readiness, people, technology and wellness services. How does your division or department contribute to these goals? How do you fit in "the big picture?" With everyone's help, we will be able to map our goals for the year. At this time next year we will be able to look back on 1999 and be proud of all we have accomplished as a team. Plus, you will have accomplished your personal goal!

It is comforting to know our future is in



Captain Joan M. Huber, NC, USN

such good hands and I look forward to all the wonderful ideas and accomplishments each of you will contribute to the command. There is nothing we can't accomplish as a team! Have a safe, happy and healthy 1999.

20 November 1998

Dear Captain Huber,

I would like to extend a belated congratulations to you and your staff at the Medical Examination Clinic for the certificates they received for Outstanding Medical Care and Outstanding Customer Service for the Third Quarter, FY-98.

Additionally, please extend my congratulations to the Pediatric Clinic for the certificate they received for Outstanding Medical Care for the Third Quarter, FY-98.

In my estimation -- and the certificates certainly confirm it -- your team of medical professionals is beyond compare.

Sincerely

C. L. STANLEY
Brigadier General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding

Captain J. M. Huber Commanding Officer Naval Hospital MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, CA 92278 The *EXAMINER* Newsletter is an authorized publication of Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms, CA 92278-8250. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of the Navy.

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## Chaplain's Corner...

# Radical Spiritual Surgery

By Lieutenant Daniel Dudley, CHC, USNR Naval Hospital Chaplain

he mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but a perverse tongue will be cut out. (Pr. 10:31) And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. (Mt 5:30)

Happy New Year!!! Another year has whisked by like an injury claims Lawyer in pursuit of an ambulance. We face another 11.5 months of 1999 and then Y2K will hit the reset button on our computer-based society, and we will start all over in 2000. Time seems to be going faster the grayer my hair becomes.

The best thing about the New Year is that

the hustle and bustle of the holiday season finally begins to subside, and now we can pause to reflect on the year gone by and resolve to extract those self made hurdles that hinder us from being all we were created to be. The New Year is a time of self-inspection. We weight the past, assess the present, and plan our future.

If we can be honest with ourselves in this self-inspection process, there is not one of us who does not have certain things that need to be cut away, rooted out, or extracted. Sin is to the mind and soul what cancer is to our bodies. Therefore, if we want to find life we may need to under go radical spiritual surgery.

Sin is deeper than a hand, eye or tongue issue. It incubates in the heart, mind and soul. Extracting sin at its earliest stages is always the preferred treatment. If we let



Lieutenant Daniel Dudley

sin go untreated it may result in body damage and ultimately the loss of spiritual life.

Reflecting upon extreme measures taken in means of survival reminds me of a large species of land-crab called the "Tupa". It would bore deep into the soil, the holes sometimes extending a considerable distance. At night, this crab loves to make its way to the sea for the purpose of getting a drink and taking a bath. Now it would sometimes happen that when in a hurry through the tall grass and fern, some of the legs would get tangled and it would become trapped. So determined are these crabs to reach their destination they will wrench off the trapped leg to continue their journey. You may see a crab hobbling along without two or three of its legs. In some rare instances these crabs have been known to wrench off all eight of their legs to escape entrapment. It then uses its nipper or claws to pull its body back to he hole. Where it hides until the legs partially develop themselves again, although not with their original length and beauty.

If we were all as willing to part with our favorite sins as the Tupa crab is with its defiled limbs, we would all be delivered form the sins that constrict and bind us, robbing us the opportunity to sip and bath in God's glory.

This year as you make your new years resolution, ask yourself if you are in need of radical spiritual surgery. If you answer yes, I would refer you to God, the great Physician and spiritual surgeon. The altar is the operating table and prayer is the anesthetic.

### Hail and Farewell...

#### Welcome Aboard

LCDR K. Milson LCDR B. Borse HM2 S. Chang MS2 J. Holtry HM2 T. Washington MSSN N. McCloe HN W. Helmick HN A. Dawson HN T. Elliott HM2 A. Bouges MS1 R. Corpuz MS3 M. Maahs

SK2 A. Strong MS3 E. Lilagan MS3 J. Reed SKCS E. Salvador HM3 R. Saunders FC2 A. Star MS3 K. Saunders HM2 P. Huntz HM1 F. Henley HA C. Arevalo HM1 P. Hankinson HM3 R. Gross

## Letters...

#### Thanks for the Candy

Dear Captain Huber,

Thank you so much for the candy. Our event was very successful with over 600 children attending.

Please thank all who helped. We appreciate it!

Thanks, Larry City of Twentynine Palms

#### New Family Member Kaiser Baby Boy

Lieutenant Junior Grade Maria and Russell Kaiser are proud to announce the birth of their son, Noah Robert Kaiser who was born at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms at 10:54 p.m. on December 1, 1998. Noah weighed 8 pounds 4 ounces and measured 19.4 inches in length at birth.

Congratulations.

#### Farewell

LTJG R. Booker LTJG D. Garcia LT J. Milburn CDR J. Norton LT N. Ramirez LTJG J. McDade LT D. Gertsch LTJG D. Whitley LTJG A. Varani ENS E. Rodriquez



SK3 L. Schuyler receives her Desert Rat from LT L. Graham.

# **Keeping Your Fitness Resolution**

Tou've made the decision—the new year marks the start of your fit ness awakening. Getting in shape is Number One on your painstakingly made list of resolutions for the coming year. But wasn't this resolution Number One on your list last year?

Why is it difficult for so many people to stick to an exercise program? Some of the most common excuses for not exercising are 1) not enough time, 2) lack of self-discipline, and 3) lack of interest. The following is designed to help you get over these hurdles and figure out how to fit exercise into your life-style.

#### Questions to Ask Yourself

- Why have you made this important decision to exercise? For weight loss? Stronger muscles? Reduced stress? Prioritize your goals in order of im-
- How would you describe yourself when confronted with a challenge? Motivated? Hesitant? A procrastinator? Write down the adjectives with which you identify most strongly.
- How much uncommitted time do you have? Add up all the hours you realistically have to yourself. Family members can add in the free time they share with their spouse or children. Don't forget lunch hours, coffee breaks, and television time.
- How do you spend your free time? Are you a loner or do you seek out the company of others? Jot down a few sentences describing what you do during your spare time.
- When is your "downtime" of the day the time when you feel least energetic or unmotivated? Do you get a midmorning slump or the 3 o'clock blahs?

#### Put Your Answers to Work

1. Your answer to question number one will help you define what kind of exercise you should do. If, for example, your answer was weight loss, start off with a program that emphasizes aerobics like brisk walking,

reduction, start by adding ten-minute stretch breaks to your day when you're really feeling uptight. You can then build on this, but you'll be more likely to stick to a program if the first results you see are attainable. Success breeds more success. If you react positively to new challenges with a "let's get 'em" attitude, you probably won't need outside motivation. But if you tend to lose sight of your goals, consider exercising with a friend or in an exercise class or other group activity. Peer and family support and, in some cases, competition may help you stick to an exercise program.

swimming, or cycling. If it's stress

Surprise! You've uncovered extra time in the day. You can start off your fitness program with as little as 1 ½ hours per week. That's only three 30-minute workouts.

- How you spend your free time is a clue to keeping your exercise interest level high. You might enjoy combining your workout with some other activity you enjoy, such as listening to music.
- Your "downtime" can be a good time to exercise. Instead of grabbing a cup of coffee to pick yourself up, grab your sneakers and take a brisk walk or jog. You may have to forfeit lunch at your favorite restaurant or work a slightly longer day, but the trade off is well worth it.

#### Take the Next Step

This mini self-inventory can help you understand more about yourself and most importantly, realize you are capable of a commitment. Now, it's up to you. Happy New Year!

Source: From the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Parlay International

## Self-care Today for Better Health Tomorrow

#### What is Self-care?

Self-care is making personal decisions about your health and medical care.

Self-care is health promotion, disease prevention and disease management.

Self-care is taking care of yourself by living a healthy lifestyle.

#### Why is Self-care important?

Self-care provides you with the tools to make informed decisions about your health and medical care so you can become a wise medical consumer.

Self-care reduces your medical cost and trips to the doctor.

Self-care helps to build a partnership with your doctor.

Self-care helps to prevent or reduce your risk of illness and disease.

Self-care leads to vitaltity and improved quality of life.

#### Components of Self-care

Health Promotion: Living a healthy lifestyle by maintaining appropriate weight, getting moderate daily physical activity, not smoking, and stress manage-

ment are just a few health habits that prevent or postpone disease.

Disease Prevention: Immunizations and screening for early detection of disease.

Disease Management: Controlling existing health conditions with appropriate medications, nutrition, physical activity and relaxation techniques.

Knowledge: Learning about medical conditions (such as common injuries, colds, allergies, pain, fever, and skin problems) and over the counter medications can give you the knowledge to help you make informed medical decisions.

#### **Self Care Resources**

Self-care books: There are a variety of easy to read self-care books. Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms provides a complimentary copy of Well Advised: A Practical Guide to Everyday Health Decisions to each TRICARE Prime registration card at the Family Practice Clinic during regular clinic

Telephone Advice Line: Naval Hospital

Please see SELF on page 7

# Drill Tests the Skills, Stamina of Hospital Medical Staff

By Lieutenant Janet Thorley, NC Family Practice Clinic, Naval Hospital

mass casualty drill was held recently in conjunction with the "Desert Night" Marine field exercises. Lieutenant Commander Gauron, the Regimental Surgeon, organized the drill as training for the Regimental Aid Station (RAS) corpsmen and invited medical personnel from the Naval Hospital and Military Sick Call to participate.

Regimental Aid Station corpsmen were HM2 Paul Lacombe, HM2 Sherman Fitzgibbon, HM2 Patrick Sheridan, HM2 (sel) Matthew Brooks, HM3 Israel Garrison, HM3 Jaime Figuroa, HMC Eric Sterns, HM3 Barrientos, and HM3 Jerome Cellura. Hospital participants included ENS Christopher Gay, HN Alison Watkins, HA Bethany Steele, HN Larry Pon, LT Janet Thorley, CDR Cathy Wagstaff, and LTJG Jennifer Bratz. Military Sick Call staff included HN Benjamin Berkowitz, HM2 Bobby Posey, HMC Daniel McCoy, LT Luciano Valero, HM2 Cary Carver, HN Laticia Ball, LTJG David Whitley, and LCDR JoAnn Joseph.

The corpsmen were paired with RAS corpsmen to do initial triage and care of the 25 moulaged casualties with scenarios/ field medical card attached to their clothing; the nurses simulated the Battalion Aid Station staff. CDR Gauron and the Senior Enlisted staff assisted the corpsmen with evaluating

their triage. CDR Wagstaff provided a quick class on Trauma Assessment for the nurses and we practiced rudimentary triage skills including Rapid Assessment and Primary Treatment based on our evaluation and prep for medevac. She also provided feedback to the corpsmen as they brought in their patients and gave a turnover report.

CDR Wagstaff is a Family Nurse Practitioner who served as a Flight Nurse for

the 57th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Clark AFB in the Philippines/ Vietnam for 27 months from 1969 to 1972. Their flights picked-up patients in Da Nang, Saigon, Camron Bay, South Vietnam and Thailand and evacuated patients to Japan, Guam, Hawaii, or Conus. She also served as an FNP in the Emergency Room and at Staff Sick Call with Fleet Hospital 5 in Al Jabul, Saudi Arabia during Desert Shield/ Desert Storm for eight months from 1990 to 1991. Her experience and willingness to participate and teach was very valuable to the corpsmen and nurses who attended.

The FSSG Shock Trauma Platoon was called in and simulated a combat situation by setting up several patient care drash tents in under 15 minutes. The STP corpsmen were well-trained and could verbalize ap-

> propriate immediate interventions as well as the set up and application of advanced interventions such as chest tube placement for hemo/pneumothorax and intubation and crico-thyrotomy for facial

The STP brought its 997 HMMUV ambulance which is limited here at Twentynine Palms but was used extensively during Desert Storm. The ambulance holds 4 litters and has room and a sliding seat for the corpsmen to safely move about and care for patients while in

ter from Miramar Marine Corps

a tour and safety brief for loading/unloading patients; it can be configured to hold 24 litter patients. The staff had the opportunity to practice transferring from the loaded HMMUV ambulance to the helicopter.

Other activities included a MRE lunch (the first for some of us) and a ride to and from the field in a freezing 5-ton. This gave us a taste of the weather and lack of comforts the Marines and field corpsmen were experiencing during their 10 days in the field in support of "Steel Night" (it snowed Saturday night). A few of us also got a tour of the Regimental BAS camp, saw the Engineer's drop supplies via helicopter, and witnessed amphibious LAVs (Landing Assault Vehicles) and LARs (Light Armored Rovers) on the move...got to love it! There are Combined Armed Exercises in April and May for those who are interested.



# MISSION...

Continued from page 1

billets open in the Navy," said CAPT Freer. Then, according to CAPT Freer, when he applied and was accepted to medical school, he switched to the Navy scholarship program to ensure that he would be able to enter the Navy. "Having grown-up around the Navy and feeling more comfortable with it, I was just more interested in being a Navy officer," he said.

Captain Freer's Navy career started when he entered Louisiana State University School of Medicine in August 1980 as an Ensign in the Navy Reserve under a Navy medical school scholarship. He earned his M.D. degree in 1984 and completed a basic surgical internship at Naval Hospital San Diego in 1985.

From there, CAPT Freer has gone on to become board certified in both Family Practice and Occupational Medicine and holds advanced qualifications in Sports Medicine.

Captain Freer views his job as having two persepectives. "Yes, you are leading people, and implementing the CO's policies to meet the mission responsibilities, but you also work to support everybody in the command so they can do their job to the best of their abilities," said CAPT Freer.

Captain Freer's first impression of the command upon checking in was a good one. "This place is really unique. At this and only one other command that I'd checked into I felt like the command environment was really home," said CAPT Freer. "There is a sense of family, a sense of caring, and a command environment where shipmates take care of one another. It's a small enough command, so there's no excuse not to know everybody. It's not so busy that you can't walk around and get to know the spaces and to know the people. In a remote environment you have to look to your shipmates for friendship and moral support because that's all you've got. You get the feeling here that there is a sense of family, a sense of teamwork and you don't have that at a lot of commands. There is a feeling of pride and investment in the mission which permeates the spaces. The command morale seems to be pretty good here, I've felt that the first day, and I haven't changed my opinion at all," he added.

Captain Freer stated, "I have to tell you that in driving over the hill and watching

the sun come up over the desert, I was looking out over the empty vista and was waiting for the sound track to 'High Plains Drifter' to come through the radio or something. And while I'm looking-out over this view I was thinking that this is really remote. However, I've done a lot of camping in the desert and I really enjoy it because the view changes every hour of the day... probably the bleakest time is between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., there is a lot to do here and it is a great place."

Captain Freer's only other visits to Twentynine Palms were to the recent change of command and from quite a while back when he came here as a battalion doctor on a Combined Arms Exercise.

"As stated earlier, I believe in... Mission first, people always with the emphasis on people. You can have all of the hardware and technology in the world available, but you cannot perform the mission without the

people," said CAPT Freer. "Here at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms you have very well-educated, highly-technical people. You try to foster the aspects of teamwork by presenting what is the required tasking and what are the goals and objectives to the staff. With that in mind, you can turn over the mission to these people, and they can come up with very creative ways of accomplishing that mission, and in most cases their solution turns out to be the very best way of accomplishing things in the first place," he said. "I believe in maintaining situational awareness and I abhor micro-management. I also believe in delegating and in mentoring. One of the most important aspects of good leadership is providing an example to others and in mentoring the development of the staff," he added.

"As a leader we are involved in stewardship of the Navy's most valuable asset... it's people," said CAPT Freer.

# Health Promotion at Twentynine Palms

By Lieutenant M.A. McMackin, NC, USNR

embers of the staff that partici pate in Health Promotion as a collateral, and our new coordinator, Carol Gaidis, are proud that this past year we received the Navy Environmental Health Center Award for Command Excellence in Health Promotion. (Bronze Anchor Award).

To be eligible for this award, the command needed to show a "can-do" attitude. We needed to creatively manage equipment, funds, and personnel in the areas of smoking prevention and cessation, physical fitness and sports, back injury prevention, nutrition education, and hypertension screening. Thanks to the Physical Therapy Department, (PT) back injury prevention teaching was provided to both hospital staff and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Marines (MCAGCC).

Petty Officers Banning, Santos and Kaebisch still keep the tobacco cessation classes going. These "can-do" corpsmen teach the only class on tobacco cessation offered at MCAGCC. Petty Officer W. Wilson, of PT, provided most of the work at the blood pressure screening booth set up

monthly at the exchange. Elaine Grossman, the dietician, has been a great help in nutrition awareness for both the hospital and the green side. Chief Jackson, LCDR Lofland, Bev Noble, HM3 Edmunds, and others kept our aerobics and stretching exercises going. Could it be that is why so many personnel made an outstanding in their PRT? Numerous others have contributed, too. And it is they we wish to thank for our successful year!

P.S. For up-to-date announcements on health promotion, see our displays near the elevators. The information is constantly changing!

## Takin' The Oath...



HM3 Donna Tenney takes the reenlistment oath at a recent ceremony.

# Walk-in Pregnancy Testing and Birth Control Refill Procedures Changing at Hospital OB/GYN Clinic

LT. M. A. McMackin, NC, USNR, NHTP

hild abuse is a problem, but there are solutions. As the former Surgeon General Everett Koop stated, "The starting point of effective child abuse prevention is pregnancy planning."

With these concerns in mind, Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms hopes to be the first Naval Hospital to implement a preconception clinic. The purpose of the clinic is to help military families plan healthy and wanted pregnancies. Research proves that counseling before pregnancy (called preconceptual counseling) helps reduce birth defects, from, for example, low folic acid intakes. Also important, unintended preg-

nancies affect the well-being of children and families.

Last month the OB clinic at the Naval Hospital changed its pregnancy testing procedure to include a visit with a health care provider when a pregnancy test is requested. Before this clinic was designed, the clinic receptionist ordered urine pregnancy tests on a walk-in basis. More than 60 percent of the women requesting a pregnancy test had a negative result. The high percentage of negative results is an opportunity for our staff to meet with the women requesting pregnancy tests and discuss the issues of birth control or preconceptual counseling. If the woman wants to be pregnant, then preconceptual counseling will be offered. Preconceptual counseling includes nutritional education, health and heredity screening. If a pregnancy is not desired, birth control options will be discussed. Depending upon the presenting conditions, a pregnancy test will be ordered. If the test is positive an appointment will be given in the OB clinic for follow-up. For times and days pregnancy testing is available please call 830-2258.

Another service the OB/GYN clinic will offer is walk-in refills on birth control pills, Depo Provera injections, and other hormonal prescriptions for newly arriving clients. This will assist women who are transferring from civilian care or another military facility that are not able to get provider appointments in time to get their prescriptions renewed.

### Naval Hospital Hard Chargers...



ENS M. Reny receives a Navy Commendation Medal.

Debbie Kaup, below, receives a length of service award.



LT J. Sperring, above, receives a Navy Commendation Medal.

# SELF...

#### Continued from page 4

Twentynine Palms offers professional nursing advice based on standard protocols Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Advice for self-care and home treatments is provided when an appointment with a provider is not indicated. The Advice Nurse can be contacted through Central Appointments or the Family Practice Clinic. The Health Care Information Line, a 24-hour phone service through Foundation Health offers recordings of over 500 health related topics in their AudioHealth Topic library. A professional nurse is also available to give

phone advice. Call 1-800-611-2883.

Health Promotion Department or Wellness Center: Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, in conjunction with various base services, offers a wide range of classes such as Tobacco Cessation, New Parent Support Group, Anger and Stress Management, Mental Health counseling, Breast Feeding, Breast Cancer education and Nutritional counseling.

Excerpts taken from the Southern California Health Foundation Resource Directory published by Foundation Health Federal Services.



MS3 T. Watts receives a Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

# More Hard Chargers...



LCDR K.
Goldberg, left,
receives a Navy
Commendation
Medal.

HM3 J. Runner, right, receives a Letter of Commendation.



LT C. Kelly, right, receives a Navy Commendation Medal.



FC left dis Ho Dis Cerhis ree cer

FC2 T. Price, left, proudly displays his Honorable Discharge Certificate at his recent reenlistment ceremony.

LT L. Perez, right, receives a Navy Commendation Medal.

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